CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

COUNTRY Rumania

SUBJECT Production and Inoculation of Ergot

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2. There was, as previously mentioned, no cultivation of ergot in Rumania. In reality the country was not scientifically geared to produce for medicinal purposes the amounts which were collected by collectors functioning within the country. 50X1 in all of Rumania there were perhaps no more than two pharmacists who made extracts from ergot. One such pharmacist produced ergot extracts in the town of Lugoj. the other pharmacist was located in Bucharest. 50X1 These pharmacists made all ergot preparations commercially handled by Rumanian drug concerns. The process which these two men used was a fairly simple one and is well known everywhere. 50X1 Hungary in 1948 and 1949 a number of experiments were being conducted. 50X1 These experiments were all attempts to cultivate ergot. The experiments took place at the University of Budapest, at the University House of Natural Sciences in the Museum Körut. Since Soviet influence was considerable at that time, the research and experiments were conducted in secrecy. This was not unusual because every phase of scientific investigation (no matter how innocuous) was performed in secrecy. 50X1 Professor Meleg Janos was one of the leaders of the aforementioned experiments.

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[redacted] several experiments had been successfully completed in various rye fields of Hungary. [redacted] 50X1

3. Growth of Ergot in Rumania

a. The environmental conditions which are conducive to the development and growth of the disease (ergot) depend to a great extent upon humidity. Nevertheless, ergot is generally found throughout all the rye growing areas of the country. The major yielding areas, however, are:

(1) Salaj. This is one of the major ergot producers of the country. [redacted] in any good rainy season [redacted] collected five thousand kilograms. 50X1

(2) Lugoj - Sibu. Although this area was capable of yielding two thousand pounds [redacted] never collected over 500 kilograms. 50X1

(3) Beius. This region produced on a basis comparable to Lugoj.

One Hungarian or Rumanian acre (5755 square meters) was capable of yielding from 90 to 130 kilograms of ergot.

4. Techniques of Inoculation

a. Rumania is undeveloped in the inoculation of ergot. [redacted] 50X1

[redacted] 50X1

b. [redacted] used both the insect and machine method. The insect method can be referred to as the sugar-water method. In other words, sweetened water was placed in vats among rye growths. The water had been previously infected with clavicep purporea (ergot); consequently, when the insects had made contact with the infected sweetened water they were able to carry this infection from the water to the rye plants. Through insect infectation [redacted] two or three points on each grain were infected by the insect itself. The temperature of the liquid [redacted] used for the above varied from minus to plus five degrees centigrade. 50X1 50X1 50X1

[redacted]

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5. Collection and Storage

a. Raw ergot is collected at the time when rye is threshed. No special methods or techniques were employed as late as 1949. During the process of threshing rye the seeds or kernels, of course, drop through a screen; however, the ergot remains on the screen itself. In most cases the ergot was removed by hand, but in several of the more modern areas it was removed by a blowing apparatus. instructions to collectors were very simple. keep the ergot dry, free from dirt, and to deliver the ergot as quickly as it was collected. The latter advice was premised upon the fact that since ergot has an extremely high protein content it becomes wormy in periods ranging from 10 days to two weeks.

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b.

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ergot grown in Rumania was used domestically.

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dry, cool places. It was never stored directly on the floor but at mid-height in storage rooms. collectors always considered ergot a "fast deal item". In other words - collect it and sell it as quickly as possible. Since its use in Rumania was confined to pharmaceutical needs, ergot was never fully exploited.

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